

REMARKS

In the above-identified Office Action the Examiner has rejected claims 1-3, 5 and 6 as being unpatentable over Jackson in view of Mitsuhashi. The Examiner has concluded it would have been obvious to have provided the claimed gap fluctuation range or range between centers as mere optimization. Applicant believes the rejection to be in error, noting that Jackson only teaches the limiting of the vertical travel of his carrier plate vis a vis the bottom plate, not the horizontal travel of Jackson's carrier plate. There is no teaching of limiting the vertical gap between the chuck and the retainer ring plate. Applicant has amended claim 1 so that it now better recites this distinction. Applicant has now recited in claim 1 that the retainer ring and chuck can be moved in a direction parallel to the reciprocal movement of the rotary shaft while the fluctuation of the size of the vertical gap (i.e., parallel to the rotary shaft) is maintained within limits. Thus, while Jackson maintains his horizontally disposed gap between the carrier plate and the bottom plate, applicant maintains the vertically disposed gap between the retainer ring and the chuck. This is not a mere optimization of parameters but rather a completely different gap being maintained.

Jackson discloses that a retaining ring 49 and peripheral wall of a bottom plate 55 are sealed by seals 61 and 63, and the pistons 43 and 45 can move independently of each other relative to a carrier plate 41 in a direction parallel to axis 42 (see col. 4, lines 2-17).

In Jackson there is no gap parallel to the axis 42 between the bottom plate 55 and the retaining ring 49, and the only direction of movement of the carrier plate is parallel to the axis 42.

On the other hand, the instant invention has structure so that "the retainer ring and the chuck can be moved in a direction of the rotary drive shaft and in a direction parallel to the reciprocal movement of the rotary drive shaft independently from each other", and

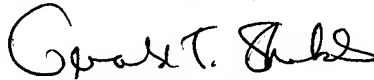
that “ maintains the fluctuation of the size of a gap in its horizontal movement during the reciprocal movement of the rotary drive shaft and keeps the size of the gap within a predetermined range”.

Jackson does not disclose such configurations, and of course, the effect derived from the instant invention cannot be gained from Jackson et al.

Applicant hereby requests reconsideration and re-examination thereof.

With the above amendments and remarks applicant believes this application to be ready for allowance and earnestly solicits and early notice of same. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject invention she is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at the below listed number.

Respectfully submitted,
WELSH & KATZ, LTD.



Gerald T. Shekleton
Registration No. 27,466

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WELSH & KATZ, LTD.
120 South Riverside Plaza
22nd Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60606-3912
Telephone: (312) 655-1500
Facsimile (312) 655-1501